



Stress Management Practices in Indian Industry

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ABSTRACT: *Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse circumstances. The nature of work is changing at rapid speed, may be now more than ever before. As we try to concentrate more on accomplishment of professional commitments, stress levels are at their highest point. Work related stress arises where job or the organization demands the work which is beyond the capacity and capability of an employee. Today, stress management has evolved as an individual stream of study. To manage stress at work place is responsibility of both and employer and an individual. Stress management refers to wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress. This paper focuses on causes of stress at work place and study of stress management techniques adopted by the best employer in India.*

keywords: *Causes of Stress ,Work related stress, Stress Management Technique, Stress Management Practices in Indian Industry.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress – a silent killer. The nature of work is changing at rapid speed, may be now more than ever before, job stress threaten the health of workers and hence the health of the organization and nation. Career is a word that includes so many things in it like, competition, deadlines, follow ups, targets, schedules, meetings, and so many others which keep us busy on professional end. As we try to concentrate more on accomplishment of professional commitments, stress levels are at their highest point. Work related stress arises where job or the organization demands the work which is beyond the capacity and capability of an employee. The main cause of work related stress is poor organization culture. Today, stress management has evolved as an individual stream of study. To manage stress at work place is responsibility of both and employer and an individual. The employer should try to provide the stress free organization culture which is encouraging, motivating and recreational for the employee.

According to the inaugural Asia Pacific edition of the 'Staying @Work' survey, stress is the number one lifestyle risk factor, ranking above physical inactivity and obesity. As per the survey almost one in every three Indian employers has instituted stress or resilience management programme in 2013 and almost equal number plan to follow suit in 2014. Furthermore it is noteworthy that Indian employers fared better than Asia Pacific counterparts in managing employees' work related stress. One of the most common solutions adopted by employers to manage employees' stress is offering flexible working hours. Other top solutions adopted by employers are stress management workshops, yoga, tai chi and undertake education and awareness campaign to help their employees manage stress.

This paper focuses on causes of stress at work place and study of stress management techniques adopted by the best employer in India.

What is Stress?

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. Stress happens when one feels that he can't cope with pressure and this pressure comes in many shapes and forms and triggers physiological response. And it creates perceived threats to one's survival. Some most common causes of stress are survival stress, internal stress, environmental stress, and fatigue and overwork.

Stress @ Work:

Stress at work can be termed as -

- Work-related stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.
- Stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues, as well as little control over work processes.
- There is often confusion between pressure or challenge and stress and sometimes it is used to excuse bad management practice.

In modern competitive era, pressure at work is unavoidable. Tolerable level of pressure keeps employees alerts; it motivates the employees and strengthens the employees' to meet the dead lines. However, when pressure becomes unmanageable or intolerable, it leads to stress. Stress is harmful to employees' as well as organization's health. Work related stress arises because of poor organizational culture.

Causes of Stress @ Work:

As per the survey report by Tower Watson, following are the top causes of stress @ work in India, Asia Pacific, United States, Europe, Middle East & Africa (EMEA).

Top causes of work-related stress for employees

Causes Of Work Related Stress	India	Asia Pacific	United States	Emea
Unclear Or Conflicting Job Expectations	40%	29%	36%	33%
Inadequate Staffing (Lack Of Support, Uneven Workload Or Performance In Group)	38%	41%	52%	49%
Lack Of Work/Life Balance (Excessive Workloads And/Or Long Hours)	38%	32%	24%	28%
Organizational Culture, Including Lack Of Teamwork, Tendency To Avoid Accountability And Assign Blame To Others	32%	31%	33%	31%
Low Pay (Or Low Increases In Pay)	29%	37%	38%	28%
Technologies That Expand Availability During Nonworking Hours (E.G., Mobiles, Notebooks)	27%	16%	8%	9%
Lack Of Supervisor Support, Feedback And Not Living Up To Their Word	26%	23%	23%	22%
Lack Of Technology, Equipment And Tools To Do The Job	18%	18%	13%	15%
Fears About Job Loss, Too Much Change	16%	16%	20%	22%
Fears About Benefit Reduction/Loss (E.G., Lower Value Or Loss Of Health Care Coverage, Reduction In Retirement Benefits)	12%	16%	11%	7

II. STRESS MANAGEMENT

Stress management refers to wide spectrum of techniques and psychotherapies aimed at controlling a person's level of stress, especially chronic stress, usually for the purpose of improving everyday functioning. Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress. The management of stress has become the most important skill for the corporate era. There is no single solution for stress management but it is a step wise process which incorporates so many interrelated activities. The following chart shows the step wise approach shows the process of prevention of stress.



Stress Management in Indian Industry:

With growing stress level among the employees, employers are giving attention to personal enhancement of employees to increase the efficiency at business organization. Nowadays stress management has become key responsibility area of managers in many companies. Companies are just not only focusing on IQ but also on EQ, and SQ. The following table shows the recreational activities undertaken by Indian companies for stress management, as per Tower Watson ‘stress @ work’ survey.

Top 10 steps taken by employers to manage stress

Initiatives	India	Asia Pacific	United States	Emea
Flexible Working Options	50%	40%	51%	50%
Stress Mgmt Interventions (E.G., Workshops, Yoga, Tai Chi)	43%	38%	39%	16%
Education And Awareness Campaigns	41%	41%	40%	26%
Promotion Of Employee Assistance Program (Eap)	40%	24%	85%	29%
Specialised Training For Employees	30%	26%	23%	39%
Training For Managers	23%	24%	34%	41%
External Resources Used To Design And Deliver Program(S)	16%	12%	23%	18%
Expanding Eap And Other Services To Dependents	15%	10%	46%	25%
Anti-Stress Space	12%	10%	10%	4%
Written Guidelines On Stress	10%	9%	7%	9%

This paper focuses on the stress management activities undertaken by best employer in India. Before few years, candidates used to prefer employers on the basis of 3 to criteria like salary and perks, working hours, leaves and maximum up to insurance cover. But nowadays employees are looking something more than just salary and said criteria. Employees look at the overall organization culture while selecting an employer. And this overall organizational culture and something more than just salary helps to reduce the stress level amongst the employees.

The following are the best employer in India -2013, as per survey conducted by business today.

1. Google India
2. Accenture
3. Tata Consultancy Services
4. Infosys
5. Larsen & Toubro

Now let us look at stress management practices undertaken by the above employers in India.

III. GOOGLE INDIA

Google India is one of the best companies to work in and the employees are most satisfied, claims many surveys conducted by different organization year on year. The company provides very warm and sound organizational culture to every employee in each of the department. The stress management techniques at Google India includes- Flexible working hours and don't have time cards.

- **Googler 2 Googler :** Nooglers (New hires) have induction programme at some of the most beautiful place in the world, enables employees to share their knowledge with peers.
- **Play Dough:** Every manager was given a budget to spend on a fun group activity outside office.
- **Free Legal Advice:** Googlers get free legal advice .
- **Travel Without Worries:** All googlers and family members get travel insurance and emergency services even when they are on personal vacation.
- **Celebration of Local Festivals:** In all the campus of Google India, company celebrates all major local festivals.
- **Cafeteria:** Google provides the best food and one can never get bore eating at Google cafeteria. The chief chef will come to dining table and will ask about the taste and suggestions for the food.
- **Sports Activities:** Google office features foosball, ping pong and pool tables, an outdoor basket ball court and indoor cricket pitch.
- **Gym:** Google provides excellent gymnasium facility and a massage center

1. Accenture:

Accenture offers 'Total Reward' package to each of the employees which includes compensations, perks, personal growth opportunities and a successful career with healthy life style involving, family, friends, and community. The company has applied ergonomics – the science of fitting the physical aspect of work environment to the human body. It helps employees to understand the potential hazards of incorrect work station posture and apply correction to the posture. Accenture provides work place flexibility which includes – Flexi time schedule, job sharing, work from home, fly back etc.

IV. TATA CONSULTANCY SERVICES

At TCS work life balance is an important aspect of employees. TCS regularly organizes employee engagement programmes. TCS has introduced stress management as part of HR policy of the company.

- **Sports:** TCS offices are equipped with facilities like Table tennis, basket ball, badminton and tennis with professional coaches to train and help employees to enhance their ability.
- **Gym:** TCS office in Mumbai has a fully equipped gym with latest machine and trained fitness experts.
- **Yoga :** TCS regularly organizes Yoga camps for the employees.
- **Maitree:** The other initiatives include fun events, picnics, wellness program, and trekking camps and also promotes community development projects as part of work life balance programme.

2. Infosys:

Infosys has always been most preferred Indian company as it provides very good facilities to its employees which just not include monetary package but a homely and motivating work culture.

- **HALE:** To curb the stress level amongst employees, Infosys launched a Health Assessment & Lifestyle enrichment plan. This has been a focused response to rising concerns of employee health and the impact of work stress on our employees and their families. HALE improves organizational productivity through healthy employees and has done work in the area of employee health (physical and mental), creating a healthy work environment, amongst other things.
- **Nurture your Passion:** Infosys has a range of clubs for activities such as music, movies, sports, theatre, and photography. You can also create new clubs with like-minded Infoscions and add it to our club roll.
- **Get Social:** Meet, collaborate, and share your interests with Infoscions around the world on our intranet portal Sparsh and our social networking platform Infy Bubble. Also be part of entertaining events on campus — from concerts and family days to festivals and award ceremonies.
- **A Friendly Ear:** At Infosys, you'll find mentors to guide you in your career. You will only get better every day with managers who provide you constructive feedback and track your progress.
- Infosys allows its employees to use twitter, face book or other social networking sites.
 - It provides facilities like gym, saloon, swimming pool, table tennis etc

V. L& t:

The company has made efforts towards employee wellness through 'Working on Wellness' initiative. This focuses on stress management and essential healthcare to enhance the overall employee well-being and promote work -life balance.

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